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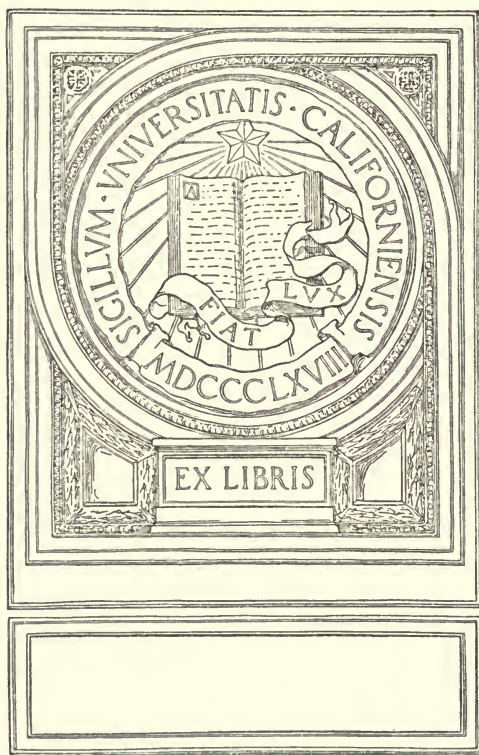
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New York Colonization Society

AFRICAN COLONIZATION.

At a meeting of citizens from different parts of the State of New-York, held at the session room, in Beaver-street, in the city of Albany, on the 9th day of April, 1829, Col. ELISHA JENKINS, of the county of Columbia, was called to the chair, and JAMES O. MORSE, of Otsego, was appointed Secretary.

The objects of the meeting were briefly stated by Mr. B. P. Johnson, of Oneida, and a committee, consisting of John T. Norton and Benjamin F. Butler, of Albany; Benjamin P. Johnson, of Oneida; Walter Hubbell, of Ontario; John E. Hyde, of New-York, and Duncan M'Martin, Jr. of Montgomery, were appointed to make the necessary arrangements for the organization of a *State Colonization Society*. Credentials of delegates from Utica, Lowville, Whitesborough, New-York, Canaan, Columbia county, and Canandaigua, were presented.

Adjourned to meet at the Capitol on Saturday, the 11th of April instant, at three o'clock in the afternoon.

Saturday, April 11, 1829.

The meeting again assembled, in the Senate chamber.

The Rev. Dr. NORR, President of Union College, offered the following resolution.

Resolved, That the objects of the American Colonization Society merit the aid of all the friends of our country; of Africa; and of the human race: that its past success in the great experiments which it has been making, warrants the expectation, that these important objects will at no very distant period, be accomplished; and that therefore, this meeting proceed to organize a State Society, which will promote the views, and aid the efforts of this excellent institution.

In support of this resolution, Dr. NORR said, that whatever motives might have led to the formation of the National Colonization Society, its present claims to public patronage could only be measured by its promise of future benefits. Like those other plans of magnanimity and mercy, which, in this age of adventurous enterprize, have been brought in such rapid succession before the public eye, this must stand upon its own peculiar merits—

and the previous questions for decision are, "Is it practicable? and if practicable, expedient?"

Is it then practicable? Here, doubtless, experience is the wisest counsellor; and the safest guide. What has been done, and done often, can again be done. How stands the balance of probabilities, in the ascertained issues of kindred enterprizes, as they are found recorded on the pages of authentic history?

But, not to insist on this; to say nothing of Greece civilized by colonies from Egypt; of Italy, by colonies from Greece; and of Europe, by colonies from Italy; the rising and the risen republics of America stand forth before our eyes, impressive monuments of what colonization can effect in climes more remote, and amid circumstances less auspicious, than even distant and tropical Africa now presents. Whatever conjectural arguments may have been urged against the possibility of planting colonies in Africa, it is too late to repeat them now. Colonies have already been planted there; one by British, another by American, philanthropy. The name of Sierra Leone is as familiar as it is dear to the friends of humanity.

Much must, doubtless, be done and suffered, before the colony at Montserado will have attained the same celebrity. Nor is it to be concealed that much has already been done and suffered, in creating, and merely sustaining it in being. Its history is brief; and, till lately, it has been a history of woes. Houseless and unsheltered, the colonists have had to contend with heat and rain, and war and pestilence. And yet, from these combined causes, the amount of suffering and the waste of life, have been less at Montserado than at Plymouth, that sacred locality where the pilgrims landed, and to which the children of the pilgrims from their ten thousand places of joyous habitations, still look back with so many tender and grateful recollections. Ah! had those pioneers of civilization, in this new world, a moiety of whose numbers perished during the rigors of the first New-England winter, been disheartened; or, had those friends, whence succors were derived, been disheartened; how different had been the fame acquired for themselves—how different the inheritance bequeathed to their children? Neither the climate nor the natives of Africa are so terrible to the Negro now, as the climate and the natives of New-England were to the Briton then. And if, with all this odds against them, a lodgement was made and maintained in the one, can there be a

doubt whether, a lodgement having been made, it can be maintained in the other? There can be none. If the enterprize be worth executing, it can be executed. And the only remaining question is "*cui bono*"? for whose benefit it is to be undertaken, and will the execution compensate for the blood and treasure it must cost?

That the millions of Africa, especially that part of it with which this discussion is concerned, are ignorant, degraded, and wretched, needs no proof. And are they to continue thus for ever? Not surely, if revelation be true, and God merciful. But how is a change in their condition to be produced? We have heard of nations sinking into barbarism by their own inertia, but never of their having thus arisen therefrom. So far as history reaches, at least, barbarians have been civilized, and only civilized by the influence of those who were not barbarians. In effecting the elevation of a degraded nation, a nation already elevated supplies to the philanthropist what Archimedes wanted—a fulcrum on which to plant his lever, that he might raise the world. If it be not quite impossible, it must, since it has never once occurred during the lapse of six thousand years, at least be difficult, for a nation utterly debased to renovate itself. Vicious habits acquired and institutions established, tend to perpetuate themselves; and, if permitted to take their course, must be of long continuance, if not literally eternal. But, besides the causes that bar the progress of other barbarians, the progress of Africa is barred by an additional cause. To Africa, the Slave Trade is a distinctive and special curse. While this continues, her doom is fixed. It is not in man to task himself to great and continued exertion in a country where he is liable every moment to be seized and consigned to slavery.

It is not by legal arguments, or penal statutes, or armed ships, that this accursed traffic can be prevented. Almost every power in Christendom has denounced it. It has been declared felony—it has been declared piracy; and the fleets of Britain and America have been commissioned to drive it from the ocean. Still, in defiance of all this array of legislation and of armament, slave ships ride triumphant on the ocean; and in these floating caverns, less terrible only than the caverns which demons occupy, from sixty to eighty thousand wretches, received pinioned from the coast of Africa, are borne annually away to slavery or death. Of these

wretches a frightful number are, with an audacity that amazes, landed and disposed of within the jurisdiction of this republic.

It is not by the blockade of her ports, but by the circumvallation of her coasts, that Africa can be shielded against either the insinuation or the assault of that remorseless passion, the "*sacra fames auri*," that has for centuries rendered her habitations insecure, and her fields desolate. To afford an adequate protection, a mighty barrier must every where be raised between the oppressor and the oppressed ; a barrier neither of woodwork, nor of masonry, but of muscle and sinew : a muscle and sinew that is incompatible with slavery, and can neither be bought nor sold.

This frightful scourge of Africa has ceased in the vicinity of Sierra Leone. It will soon have ceased at Montserado, as it will elsewhere, as other colonies are planted, and other watch-towers of freedom arise.

The points thus defended along the coast, will be so many radiant points to the interior. And in the view of this double efficiency of the colonists, who can calculate the ultimate result ? The tribes contiguous can hardly fail to learn from them something of arts, of science, and of religion ; or to impart what they have learned to tribes more remote. And thus those humble and noiseless emigrants, who are now erecting their dwellings, and enclosing their fields, and who have already given to the little locality they occupy an air of cleanliness and comfort, as novel as delightful in that desert region, may be founding, imperceptibly, an empire destined to be the centre of an enduring and mighty influence : an influence that shall change the habitudes of man as well as the aspect of nature ; and that shall one day be felt alike along the valleys of the Senegal and the Nile, and from the ridge of Lupata to the foot of Atlas. Who knows that the landing at the Cape of Montserado, will not be as pregnant of consequences as that at the rock of Plymouth ? Or that Africa thus excited, will not, centuries hence, exhibit as busy an industry, send forth as rich a commerce, and raise as joyful and as holy a note of praise, as either America or Europe ?

But it is not Africa alone that is to be affected by the destiny of Africa. The empire of man is one ; and all its provinces are related. By intercourse a reciprocity of benefits is conferred. Nor to either will the measure of national prosperity be full, till the resources of all have been developed.

But what does Africa contribute to the science, or the virtue, or even the wealth of nations ? In visiting more distant Asia, merchantmen traverse her coast ; but unless freighted with fetters and commissioned to traffic in blood, they merely traverse it.

There are individual houses in London, the failure of which would affect the prosperity of millions, and produce a train of evils that would be felt on both the continents ; but if the whole of Western and Southern Africa were sunk, the arts, the science, and the commerce of the world would remain untouched : nor would the space thus occupied, vast as it is, be missed, unless as a beacon, by the mariner as he crossed the ocean. Unproductive Africa is already indebted to the world for long arrears. Her mountains and plains, her hills and vallies, her rivers and lakes were never created to lie waste and desolate. Nor is it by the act of God, but of man, that this vast populous domain has been rendered valueless.

This is not mere idle speculation. There has been exported from Sierra Leone alone, in a single year, a greater amount of value, since the abolition of the slave trade, than was exported in the same period, from the whole Western coast of Africa anterior to that event. What then might not be expected, if the change of condition that has taken place in this one locality, were to become universal ? Were the slave trade every where abolished, and the African race for ever relieved from the paralyzing apprehension of treachery and violence ; were Africa throughout regenerated, and arts and science, and religion introduced through all the *terra incognita* of her vast interior ; were her soil cultivated, her mines worked, her water-power rendered productive, and the agency of wind and steam employed in her workshops, and on her waters ; were her gold and her ivory, her sandal-wood and her gums, her dyes and her drugs, with all the rich and the varied produce of her now forsaken fields, and impenetrable forests, poured down along the many tributary streams into the Nile, the Niger, the Senegal and the Gambia, and thence sent forward in rich abundance to the mart of nations ; what a vast accession would be made to the comfort and riches, and what an impulse given to the enterprise and commerce of the world ! Could such a result be produced by the expenditure of millions, economy, as well as philanthropy, would sanction the expenditure. To have a fourth of the soil of the earth uncultivated or badly cultivated, to have a fifth of the hu-

man race unemployed, or employed uselessly, is a mighty drawback on the thrift and prosperity of the residue, to which neither the philanthropist nor the economist can ever be reconciled. Were Europe suddenly sunk to the condition of Africa, how great would be our loss ! So great would be our gain, were Africa suddenly raised to the condition of Europe. Nations, like individuals, are to each other reciprocally consumers and producers ; and the more numerous and the more wealthy the customers of each become, the greater the benefit that accrues to all.

But if it would be policy in other nations to encourage colonization in Africa, how much more so in us ? Many and great as were the blessings conferred by our national independence, there exists among us one class on whom that event has conferred no benefits. I allude to our citizens of colour. Citizens whom freedom has rendered only more wretched and debased. It probably was expected that the mere striking off the chains from these bondmen would remove their disability and restore them to society. Time has for ever dissipated that illusion. Statutes have failed either to change the complexion, or to quicken the intellect. Apart from the fact of previous bondage, nature had interposed a barrier which they could not surmount, nor we demolish.

Hence, and notwithstanding all the immunities and privileges that legal enactments could confer, they remain among us an out-cast and isolated race ; shunned at least, if not contemned and despised. They may be met as convicts in penitentiaries and prisons ; they may be met as menials in stables and kitchens ; but excluded from the parlor of fashion and the hall of science, they are no where met, not even in the temple of grace, as equals and companions. All the incentives to exertion and enterprise are removed from them ; all the avenues to wealth and honor are barred against them. Degraded themselves, they degrade the very labor which they perform ; and hence it is that temperance and honesty are well nigh banished from the vocation which they follow. And yet it is not inferiority of faculties, but the force of condition, that has produced this degradation.

Recent events in a neighboring republic evince that the African race are capable of as intuitive a perception, as sublime an energy, and as dauntless a fortitude, as the residue of the species, and that they only require a theatre of action, and motive to act, to wipe away the reproach so long and so undeservedly cast upon

them. With us they have been degraded by slavery, and still further degraded by the mockery of nominal freedom. We have endeavored, but endeavored in vain, to restore them either to self-respect, or to the respect of others. It is not our fault that we have failed ; it is not theirs. It has resulted from a cause over which neither they, nor we, can ever have control. Here, therefore, they must be for ever debased : more than this, they must be for ever useless ; more even than this, they must be for ever a nuisance, from which it were a blessing for society to be rid. And yet they, and they only, are qualified for colonizing Africa. Africa is their country. In colour, in constitution, in habitude, they are suited to its climate. There they may be blessed, and be a blessing. Here they can be neither. Benevolence, patriotism, self-interest, all pronounce alike on the expediency of their removing. Let us then in mercy to them, in mercy to ourselves, and in mercy to Africa, favor and facilitate their removal.

Here we might rest the argument. But the population of whom we have been speaking is not the only population among us to whom its conclusiveness applies.

Strange that it should be so, yet so it is, in this land of freedom slavery exists, and freemen are attended and served by slaves. This only institution of tyranny is a curse engendered in other times, and under a different form of government. Still it is a curse not the less real, or the less grievous, on that account : a curse that has grown with our growth, and strengthened with our strength, till it threatens, if not the being, at least the well-being of our republic.

I am aware that our domestic slavery is considered by many as merely a local evil ; and that it has become fashionable to think, and speak of it, as though we at the North were no way implicated in its guilt, or liable to be affected by that ultimate vengeance it threatens to inflict. Is it then forgotten that slavery was once legalized in New-England ; or is it unknown that, till recently, it was legalized in New-York ? Meet we not with the memorials of its once greater prevalence in those degraded menials that still carry about with them the print of chains, retain the manners, and speak the dialect of bondage ? If the number of blacks and of slaves be less at the North than at the South, we owe this enviable distinction to our climate, not our virtue. It was neither the foresight nor the piety of the pilgrims, but the good providence of God, that traced the lines of their inheritance on this side the

natural limit of negro habitation. If the planter of the South has long appeared in the odious character of *receiver of stolen men*, the trader of the North has as long appeared in the still more odious character of *man-stealer*.

It must be admitted—with humiliation indeed—but still it must be admitted, that with New-England capital slave ships have been built, and with New-England seamen navigated. In New-England, too, have stood the work-shops in which those yokes and manacles were forged that weighed on the limbs of the captive negro during his passage to bondage. On Virginia, at least, slavery was forced contrary to her will, and against her remonstrance. Can as much be said in favor of other and more northern colonies?

But whatever may have been the comparative guilt of the parties concerned in that worst of abominations, the making merchandize of men, the alarming consequence of their joint iniquity, is sufficiently apparent by the existence among us of more than one million six hundred thousand slaves. This is an abatement of national prosperity connected with no alleviating circumstance; nor is there any softening light in which this horrid feature in our condition can be viewed. Slavery, in all its forms, is odious—in all its bearings hurtful. It is an evil gratuitous and unmixed; and equally an evil to the slave, his master, and the state.

That the horrible cruelties elsewhere practised are of rare occurrence in the United States, may readily be believed. But that slavery, even here, is maintained without cruelty, affirm this who may, is not to be believed. No; if there be either truth in history, or uniformity in nature, it is not to be believed. Not because the owners of slaves are masters, but because they are men. For when, or where, or by whom has absolute power been irresponsibly exercised, and yet not abused?

But to say nothing of bonds, and stripes, and imprisonments; and though it were admitted that with respect to mere animal existence, slaves were subsisted as well, and treated as kindly as other animals—who can think, without shuddering, of one million six hundred thousand human beings, with their countless progeny through all future generations, excluded from human sympathy, deprived of civil and of personal rights, sold from master to master, transferred from plantation to plantation, moving and forbearing to move at the bidding of a driver; denied the means

of education ; denied the consolations of religion ; denied the reading of the bible ; denied even the public worship of God ; and reduced both by usage and by penal enactment, as far as it is in the power of man to reduce a being, conscious and immortal like himself, to the mere condition of a brute ; who can think of this without shuddering ?

Though the evil of slavery to the master be less terrible, it is not less real. And here again, to say nothing of the dread of plots and insurrections that must occasionally cross the mind ; to say nothing of the habitual absence of that joyous feeling of security, that springs from a conscious interchange of benefits among the different classes of a free community ; to say nothing of the chilling thought that we derive our food and raiment from the reluctant toil of fellow creatures who surround us in the capacity of slaves, by whom our persons are abhorred, and whose fears are the only tenure by which even life is held ; to say nothing of these things, it is as little conducive to virtue as to happiness, to be placed in circumstances where power may be abused with impunity, and injury inflicted without resistance.

But I will not dwell upon this article. Whatever slavery may be to the master, to the state it is confessedly a calamity. Every free citizen added to the republic is an addition to its essential strength and riches : every slave, to its poverty and weakness. The more, therefore, the latter encrease, the more the community are impoverished and enfeebled. How much greater would be our present national strength, and how much greater our prospective blessedness, if the million and a half of slaves we already possess were transported ; the mass of ignorance and degradation inseparable from their presence swept away, and their place supplied by an equal number of educated enterprising freemen, sympathizing in our sympathies, attached to our institutions, glorying in the glory of the republic, and ready to exert their influence in the advancement of its interests, or to shed their blood in its defence ?

But the full curse of slavery is not yet developed. It is a mortal malady, as yet indeed, in an inceptive state, and preying on the extremities of the body politic : but it is a malady that is silently extending itself, and which, if not speedily arrested, may one day reach the seat of life. It is idle to speak lightly of our danger : idle to shut our eyes against it. The prudent man foreseeth the evil.

There is already existing among us a slave population greater by half a million than the whole population of the colonies at the time of their first and their last numbering, before they engaged in the struggle for independence. In 1820, our slave population amounted to 1,500,000. Their number doubles in about twenty years. The prospective calculation is therefore neither doubtful nor difficult. If their present rate of increase continues, the steps of progression will be from 1,500,000, to 3,000,000 ; to 6,000,000 ; to 12,000,000 ; to 24,000,000 ! with which number the next century will commence, carrying forward to a still more frightful extent this interminable series.

But not to pursue the calculation beyond the century in which we live, and to the close of which some who are now living may remain alive, the prospect of a census in which 24,000,000 of slaves shall be returned has enough of humiliation and sorrow in it. Twenty-four millions of slaves ! And is this republic so soon to embosom such an appalling amount of ignorant, vicious, degraded, and brutal population ! What a drawback from our strength ; what a tax on our own resources ; what a hindrance to our growth ; *what a stain on our character* ; and what an impediment to the fulfilment of our destiny ! Could our worst enemies, or the worst enemies of republics, wish us a severer reproach, or a heavier judgment ? Twenty-four millions of slaves ! Though even then, as now, they should submissively bow their neck to the yoke, and bare their back to the lash, and ply their task at a driver's bidding, how will it tell in history ; and what a showing for a nation to make who are jealous of their rights and boastful of their liberty ; a nation held up as an example to other nations ; whose sympathy distant and oppressed humanity enjoys ; whose rebuke the holy alliance have felt, and on the symbol of whose faith there remains inscribed, among truths held sacred and self-evident, " that all men are born free and equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights ; and " that among these rights are—life, liberty, and the pursuit of " happiness" ?

Though we were sure of uninterrupted tranquility, twenty-four millions of slaves to a young and a free people must be equally a calamity and a disgrace. But are we sure of uninterrupted tranquility ? During this perpetual increase of ignorant and slumbering enemies within, are we sure that wakeful and sagacious ene-

mies without will not discover our vulnerable point, and inculcating in their turn upon our slaves those lessons of freedom which we have inculcated on their subjects, and superadding force to counsel, in some awful moment, direct, to the overthrow of this republic, these tremendous and unnatural elements of its own creation ?

Or should our foreign enemies, less quick-sighted than we have any right to apprehend they will be, leave us unmolested to abide the slower but not less fatal consequences of protracted slavery, is there no danger that there will, among a people goaded from age to age, at length arise some second Touissant Louverture, who reckless of consequences, shall array a force and cause a movement throughout the zone of bondage, which, however long or short its continuance, shall, like the movement of Hyder Ally, only leave behind it plantations waste, and mansions desolate ? Is it to be believed that this tremendous physical force will remain for ever spell-bound and quiescent ? And that millions after millions will arise in being in a land of freedom, and surrounded by the monuments of freedom, and yet never attempt to exercise their prerogative and assert their rights ? And, in the prospect of such a possible contest, who does not tremble for his country, and the more so when it is considered that God is just ?

I am aware it has been said by one whose views, in general, on this subject are as enlightened as they are liberal, that any successful resistance of the slave must be remote : “ for at any time within “ sixty or a hundred years, the beacon-fires of insurrection would “ only rally the strength of the nation.” And I am also aware that it has been said, in the same spirit of conciliation, “ that there “ is hardly any enterprize to which the militia of Vermont or “ Connecticut would march with more zeal than to crush a servile “ rebellion.”

It may be even so. I know it would be remembered by them that southern men were at the side of their fathers when they braved the Canadian snows, and scaled the icy bulwarks of Quebec : that the hunting shirt of the South was seen at the heights of Cambridge, and that ere it was seen, a cry was sent forward, “ go on ; we are hastening to support you.” But I also know it will be remembered, that when the South came to the assistance of the North, it was in the spirit of freemen, and to co-operate in the establishment of freedom. It was not to bind, but to break the fetters of the captive, and set free the oppressed from the oppressor.

But should the militia of Vermont or Connecticut ever be summoned to such an enterprize, (which may Heaven prevent!) whether they obeyed with alacrity or with reluctance, it would be an enterprize in which there would be no fields of glory to gather, nor laurels of honor to be won. And though necessity were laid upon them, as they advanced along the line of their march, the thought must be saddening that they were going to employ in the re-establishment of slavery, those arms inherited from their fathers, and which their fathers employed only for the overthrow of tyrants; and still more saddening must be the thought, that no disinterested being, in either earth or heaven, sympathized in the cause they were marching to espouse, and that not an attribute of God was on their side!

But in whatever spirit such a march were undertaken, it would be as barren of benefits as of glory. The very occasion that made it necessary would make it nugatory; and faithless would be the hope that rested on it. The vengeance that bondmen execute is sudden vengeance.

Distant succor would arrive too late to prevent its execution. The hostile slave might afterwards be crushed, and desolation carried a second time over the domains of the master; but his life could not be restored, nor his authority, thus shaken, re-established. The race of slaves may, indeed, should they become rebellious, be exterminated; but slavery itself, on a great scale, can never, under a government like ours, be long upheld by military force. Whenever such a force becomes requisite the system itself must perish. Slave labor, even now, is not the most productive labor, and should it hereafter become charged with the additional expense of troops to enforce it, it will cease to be enforced, for it will no longer be worth enforcing: it being obviously cheaper to employ the yeomanry, whether of the North or South, as cultivators of the field, than to employ them as militia to enforce its cultivation.

But it is not by insurrection on the one part, or recourse to arms on the other, that the question of slavery with us is likely to be decided. Its existence at present depends, as its continuance must hereafter, much less on physical force than on the force of opinion. The existence of slavery, however, bespeaks an unnatural state of things. In whatever society the few lord it over the many, the balance of energies is disturbed; and there will be a

constant tendency in the system to weaken the preponderance of power, and restore the equilibrium. Even in governments less popular than our own, this tendency is apparent. Roman slavery has long since ceased. Feudal tyranny has passed away from Europe, and the condition of the serfs of Saxony, and the boors of Russia, is ameliorating ; and, though not free, they are gradually approximating towards freedom.

But there are causes that render the perpetuity of slavery here more difficult than elsewhere, and more difficult in the present, than in former ages.

Domestic slavery is not abhorrent to the feelings of a community accustomed to political slavery, nor inconsistent in principle with governments founded on prescriptive and hereditary privilege. It harmonizes with the institutions of Tunis, Morocco, Algiers, and the other provinces of Turkish despotism. Religion even sanctions it ; and it is felt to be as righteous as it is convenient to compel the followers of Christ to become hewers of wood and drawers of water to the followers of Mahomet. With us it is otherwise. Slavery is here a perfect anomaly. It stands out by itself an isolated institution, unsupported, unconnected, and at variance with all our other institutions. It is at variance with the spirit of our government ; at variance with its letter. It is at variance with our political principles, at variance with our religious principles, revolting to our moral feelings, and crosses all our habits of thought and action. And can there be a question whether slavery under such circumstances, in such a country, and among such a people, can be eternal ? If villanage in Britain, and even in Gaul, has ceased ; if the serfs of Saxony and the boors of Russia are rising in the scale of being, and there be even hope that the degraded Hindoo will be one day disenthralled by the diffusion of science, and the slow but resistless march of public opinion, is there no hope of disenthralment for the African, who breaths the air, and sees the light, and treads the soil of freedom ? Impossible ! Such an outrage can not be perpetual. The constitution of man, of nature, of heaven and earth, must change, or slavery be subverted. It cannot stand against the progress of society. Its doom has been pronounced already ; and the forward movement of the world will overthrow it.

Is it forgotten that this abomination was once sanctioned by even ecclesiastical authority ; and that the cross and the crescent

were alike arrayed on its side ? Is it forgotten that the negro race have been solemnly consigned to perpetual bondage by the highest authority in christendom, because they never attended mass, and were of the colour of the damned ? And thereafter that centuries rolled away during which Africa was considered as rightfully given up to plunder by christian nations ; who, without compunction and without regret, conspired to ravage her coast and reduce her captive sons to slavery ?

Nor was it till our own times that the spell which had so long bound the understanding, and the moral sense of christendom, was broken. There are those now living who remember when the slave trade, unassailed and without an enemy, remained interwoven with the policy, and intrenched in the prepossessions of every christian nation ; when the king, and the parliament, and the people, of even Britain, stood firm in its defence ; when in opposition to this array of opinion and of power, Grenville Sharp first raised his voice, and Clarkson and Wilberforce, and their coadjutors took their stand ; and who remember too the contempt with which the first humble efforts of these men of mercy were regarded : efforts which were destined to shake, and which have already shaken, the system they assailed to its base, and which have changed the current of feeling throughout the world. The slave, of whatever cast or colour, has long since been declared free the moment he sets his foot on British soil ; and the trade in slaves, already abolished by Britain, has been denounced by almost every christian nation.

Every where, as discussion has increased, the friends of slavery have diminished : and results as memorable have been effected on this side the Atlantic as on the other. Time was when slavery sat as easy on the conscience of the puritan of the North, as the planter of the South : when statesmen of the purest patriotism, and clergymen of the loftiest intellect New-England ever boasted, were found among its champions ; and when, even there, men of every rank, as much expected their slaves as their lands to descend in perpetuity to their children.

The slave trade, however, has not only been abolished by the national republic, but slavery itself has also been abolished in the whole of New-England, New-Jersey and New-York. In Delaware and Maryland it is waning to its close, and in Virginia, though it exists in strength, yet its existence is abhorred : while, by

the rise of kindred republics in Spanish America, it has, through vast and contiguous territories, suddenly ceased to exist.

These are splendid triumphs which the march of public opinion has achieved. It is still on the advance, gathering momentum as it advances. From the North and from the South alike, an influence will be sent into that narrow zone of bondage now remaining between two lands of freedom. Though the dwellers in that zone might resist the servile force that will from age to age accumulate, there is a mightier moral force accumulating, which they can not resist. No matter how bold the attitude they may assume; no matter how stern the decrees they may pass; no matter how desperate the measures they may adopt, the result will be the same. It is impossible to stay this forward movement of society, and uphold abuses that shock the conscience and cross the prevalent opinions of mankind. The more desperate the measures resorted to, the sooner the foundation on which they are based will sink beneath the pressure. And the posterity of the generation now so intent on sustaining slavery will not consent to its being sustained.

There is not an enlightened patriot at the South, who does not already abhor the system: who does not regard it as an evil: who does not desire its abolition. Our brethren of the South have the same sympathies, the same moral sentiments, the same love of liberty as ourselves. By them, as by us, slavery is felt to be an evil, a hindrance to our prosperity, and a blot upon our character. That it exists to such a fearful extent among them is not the result of choice, but of necessity. It was in being when they were born, and has been forced on them by a previous generation.

Can any considerate man, in the view of what has been done, and what is now doing, believe that amid so many merciful designs, so many benevolent activities, the negro slave will experience no deliverance? That the master will remain for ever undisturbed by the presence of stripes and chains, and continue without relents from year to year, from generation to generation, to eat the bread and wear the raiment, and export the staple, produced by the tears and sweat of bondmen? That the free and enlightened inhabitants of this proud republic will go on celebrating their fourth of July; reading their declaration of independence; and, regardless of the groans of so many millions held in bondage, persist in the mockery of holding up before the eyes of reproaching despots, of eulogizing republics, and an insulted universe, the ensign of

liberty ? It cannot be. To sustain such an abuse, under such circumstances, is impossible. There needs no domestic insurrection, no foreign interference, to subvert an institution so repugnant to our feelings, so repugnant to all our other institutions. Public opinion has already pronounced on it ; and the moral energy of the nation will sooner or later effect its overthrow.

But the solemn question here arises—in what condition will this momentous change place us ? The freed men of other countries have long since disappeared, having been amalgamated in the general mass. Here there can be no amalgamation. Our manumitted bondmen have remained already to the third and fourth, as they will to the thousandth, generation—a distinct, a degraded, and a wretched race. When therefore the fetters, whether gradually or suddenly, shall be stricken off, and stricken off they will be, from those accumulating millions yet to be born in bondage, it is evident that this land, unless some outlet be provided, will be flooded with a population as useless as it will be wretched ; a population which, with every increase, will detract from our strength, and only add to our numbers, our pauperism and our crimes. Whether bond or free, their presence will be for ever a calamity. Why then, in the name of God, should we hesitate to encourage their departure ? It is as wise as merciful to send back to Africa, as citizens, those sons of hers, whom, as slaves and in chains, we have to our injury borne from thence.

The existence of this race among us, a race that can neither share our blessings nor incorporate in our society, is already felt to be a curse ; and though the only curse entailed on us, if left to take its course, it will become the greatest that could befall the nation.

Shall we then cling to it ; and by refusing the timely expedient now offered for deliverance, retain and foster the alien enemies till they have multiplied into such greater numbers, and risen into such mightier consequence, as will for ever bar the possibility of their departure, and by barring it, bar also the possibility of fulfilling our own high destiny ? As yet it requires only to provide an asylum, and the means of reaching it, to mitigate, if not entirely to remove, this alarming evil. The self-interest and the benevolence of masters will do the rest. Many will eventually be colonized, and all manumitted.

Encouraged by the prospect which the measures of this society

have opened, the process of giving freedom to their bondmen has already commenced among the planters of the south. If the way be kept open it will progress ; and progress as fast as prudence and humanity would dictate. And thus the time may yet arrive when a second and a finished independence shall be achieved, nor print of vassal footstep defile our soil, nor chain be worn beneath our sun of freedom !

GERRIT SMITH, Esq. of Madison county, seconded the resolution.

He argued, that the white population of this country, or at least, of a very large section of it, must eventually amalgamate with the rapidly growing millions of blacks in it ; or that the one must give up the soil to the other and seek another home. He showed the better title of the whites to this land, and then asked where the blacks should go ? Whether we should colonize them in some remote portion of our new territory, or facilitate their removal to St. Domingo, or some other West India island ? To such a disposition of our coloured population, he contended there were very great objections. A populous nation in our vicinity, of such a peculiar and degraded character as not to permit it to come into the great family of nations on this continent, is, in many points of view, extremely undesirable and dangerous. We must send them back to their father-land. For every reason, it is their only home.

Mr. S. argued, that the American Colonization Society was pursuing the only effectual course for suppressing the slave trade ; that experience had abundantly proved the ineffectualness of all laws and treaties against it ; that it would never cease so long as it *could* be prosecuted ; and, that it *could* be until the slave coast was lined with settlements of christian freemen. The suppression of the slave trade, if the society accomplished no further good, would make the society for ever dear to every friend of mankind.

Mr. S. enlarged on the degraded condition of Africa, and showed how hopeless would be all attempts to pour in regenerating influences upon her from the North or East, and how certain it is, that it must be left to settlements, which christian nations make on her western coast, to radiate the beams of civilization and christianity through that black empire of ignorance and sin.

Mr. S. considered some of the objections that are raised to the practicableness of the scheme of the Colonization Society, and

said that they, who talk and write about the society needing tens and hundreds of millions of dollars to accomplish that scheme, misapprehended the extent of the undertaking of the society. The society has not undertaken to remove the whole of our black population to Africa, but to make a beginning in this work so necessary to be done, and when the society shall have a hundred or even fifty thousand colonists on the coast of Africa, its own part of the work will be done and the society dissolved. But little more then can be expected of the society than to pursue the work of colonization so far—to carry forward their settlements there to such a pitch of prosperity, and give them such an inviting aspect, that a strong desire will be created in our black population to emigrate to them. The society is but laboring to form there an attractive nucleus, around which the blacks of our country may spontaneously gather, and grow into a great nation. He relied on that strong desire to emigrate, to accomplish the whole remaining work. For the ability to gratify that desire, we depend much on the resources of the blacks themselves ; much on the aid of our governments ; much on individual benevolence : and to how great an extent will self-interest prompt our white population to make large contributions to get rid of a people, subsisting to so great a degree on private charity, and creating so much public insecurity and expense, as our poor houses and prisons abundantly testify, by their peculiar addictedness to indolence, vice and crime ?

Mr. S. dwelt much on the importance, the necessity of making this desire in our blacks to emigrate, strong and constant, inasmuch as their efforts to go would be proportioned to its strength and constancy. He would teach them that America is not their home—that here they cannot throw off their degradation ; and that never until they strike the soil of Africa, can they hold up their heads in manly independence. Mr. S. illustrated the feasibility of even our poorest blacks getting to Africa, though entirely unaided, by referring to the thousands and tens of thousands of penniless foreigners, who annually flock to our shores. The oppressions which these foreigners suffer at home, and the happy prospects that allure them to America, make them willing, even to sell themselves for their passage-money in order to get here. Why will not like causes, in the case of our blacks, produce like effects ; and they, even the poorest and least assisted of them, be seen flocking by thousands to Africa, where the prices of labor are, and for a long time will be, twice as great as here ?

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